

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-19

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 TRSE-00 SAJ-01 IO-14 OIC-04 AEC-11 OMB-01

SAM-01 DRC-01 /152 W

----- 061411

R 180825Z JUN 74

FM USDEL MBFR VIENNA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 144

SECDEF WASHDC

INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L MBFR VIENNA 0083

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: REPORT OF JUNE 7,

1974 CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET

MILITARY REP COL KAPITONOV

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF CONVERSATION BETWEEN US DEL OFFI-
CER AND SOVIET MILITARY REP COL KAPITONOV WHICH WAS
CIRCULATED BY US REP AT JUNE 17 AHG MEETING.

BEGIN TEXT.

1. IN A RECENT CONVERSATION WITH A US DELEGATION OFFICER, COL
KAPITONOV

MADE THE FOLLOWING REMARKS:

A. WHEN US DEL OFF REFERRED TO AMBASSADOR KHLESTOV'S STATEMENT
THAT PACT HELICOPTER UNITS IN THE REDUCTION AREA WERE IN ARMY AVIATION

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AND THAT THIS WAS CONTRARY TO THE WESTERN VIEW, KAPITONOV SAID THAT

"OUR" HELICOPTERS HAD NEVER BEEN INTENDED TO BE PART OF THE AIR FORCES,

BUT HAVE ALWAYS BEEN PART OF GROUND FORCES. HE DECLARED THAT THEY DID NOT JUST SUPPORT GROUND FORCES, BUT WERE CONSIDERED TO BE "ORGANIC" TO

THE GROUND FORCES AND TOOK THEIR ORDERS DIRECTLY FROM GROUND FORCE COMMANDERS. ALL OF THE SUPPORT PERSONNEL OF THESE HELICOPTER UNITS WERE ALSO CONSIDERED PART OF THE GROUND FORCES, ALTHOUGH IT WAS SOMETIMES NECESSARY TO BASE THE HELICOPTER UNITS AT A MAJOR AIR FACILITY AND THUS, IN SOME CASES, THE UNITS WERE SUPPORTED BY AIR FORCE PERSONNEL. QUESTIONED ON THE UNIFORM OF PERSONNEL IN THESE HELICOPTER UNITS, KAPITONOV REPLIED THAT AS IN ALL COUNTRIES, PEOPLE WHO FLY LIKE TO DISTINGUISH THEMSELVES BY UNIFORM, AND SO PERSONNEL IN "OUR" HELICOPTER UNITS HAVE CONTINUED TO WEAR BLUE UNIFORMS. NEVERTHELESS, THEY WERE PART OF THE GROUND FORCES.

COMMENT: IN HIS USE OF TERM "OUR HELICOPTERS" KAPITONOV DID NOT SPECIFY WHETHER HE MEANT ALL PACT FORCES OR ONLY SOVIET UNITS, BUT THE IMPRESSION WAS THAT HE WAS REFERRING TO THE SOVIET FORCES.

B. IN FURTHER RESPONSE, HE SAID THAT THERE ALSO WERE SOME PACT HELICOPTERS WHICH WERE ORGANIC TO THE AIR FORCES, PERFORMING LIGHT LOGISTIC AND ADMINISTRATIVE AIRLIFT FUNCTIONS, BUT THAT THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF PACT HELICOPTERS IN THE REDUCTION AREA WERE IN GROUND FORCES. AT THIS POINT, KAPITONOV INTERJECTED IN A JOKING MANNER THAT NOW HE SUPPOSED NATO WOULD ADD HELICOPTER PERSONNEL TO ALLIED GROUND FORCE FIGURES, WHICH FIGURES ON THE PACT WERE ALREADY FAR TOO HIGH.
END TEXTRESOR

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ALLIANCE, COLLECTIVE SECURITY, AGREEMENT DRAFT, MILITARY AGREEMENTS, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 JUN 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: golinofr
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974MBFRV00083
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740158-0344
From: MBFR VIENNA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740636/aaaaberd.tel
Line Count: 89
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION ACDA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: golinofr
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 MAR 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 MAR 2002 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <09 MAY 2002 by golinofr>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: REPORT OF JUNE 7, 1974 CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET
TAGS: PARM, NATO, MBFR
To: STATE DOD
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005